ZEPHANIAH.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

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The last of the Prophets immediately preceding the Captivity.
Unlike all the other Prophets, Zephaniah's genealogy is traced back for four generations; and, as Hezekiah of Prov. 25. 1 and Hizkiah of Zeph. 1. 1 are the same word in Hebrew as Hezekiah King of Judah, he was not improbably his great-great-grandson.

Zephaniah's prophecy is dated in 1. 1, as being given "in the days of Josiah". In ch. 2. 13 he says that Assyria shall be destroyed, and Nineveh made a desolation. Therefore it was before the fall of Nineveh, 515 B. C. according to The Companion Bible dating (Ap. 50), or 625 B. C. (according to "received" dating).

Zephaniah was the contemporary of Jeremiah. By a comparison with 2 Kings 28, which records the destruction of "the remnant of Baal" (Zeph. 1. 4), Josiah's reformation had not been completed. The prophecy may therefore he dated as coming between the twelfth and the eighteenth year of Josiah—say 518 B. C, or about three years before the fall of Nineveh.
ZEPHANIAH.

1 THE word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah the son of Cush, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

2 "I will utterly make an end of all ... from off the face of the ground, saith the LORD.

3 I will make an end of humanity and beast; I will make an end of the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks together with the lawless ones; and I will cut off man from off the ground, saith the LORD.

4 I will also stretch out My hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the names of Baal from this place, and the name of the Kemarim [black-robed] with the priests;

5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham [the king-idol];

6 And them that are turned back from after the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor inquired for Him.

7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared His sacrifice, He hath separated His guests.

8 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice, that I will visit upon the princes, and the king's sons [the royal house], and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.

9 In the same day also will I punish all those that enter the houses of others and steal, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

10 And it shall come to pass in that day,
saith the LORD, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the new city, and a great crashing from the hills.

11 Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are laid low; all they that bear silver are cut off.

12 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, 'The LORD will not do good, neither will He do harm.'

13 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

14 The great day of the LORD is very near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

16 A day of a trumpet, yea, a trumpet call to arms against the fenced cities, and against the high corner towers.

17 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: 

2 Collect yourselves together, yea, collect together, O nation not desirable;

2 Before the decree bring forth, before the judgment pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you.

3 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

4 [Mine anger shall be upon Gaza, saith the Lord], For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a ruin: they shall drive out Ashdod during the noon day siesta, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

5 Woe unto the inhabitants of the country by the sea, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

6 And the country by the sea shall be pastures and pens for sheepers, and folds for flocks.

7 And the coast shall be for [a possession to] the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit the remnant of Judah, and turn away their captivity.

8 [My judgment shall come upon Moab, for] I have heard the reproach of Moab, and
the revilings of the sons of Ammon, whereby they have reproached My People, and magnified themselves against their border.

9 Therefore as I live, is the oracle of Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of My People shall spoil them, and the remnant of My People shall inherit them.

10 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the People of the LORD of hosts.

11 The LORD will be terrible unto them: for He will cause to waste away all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship Him, every one from his place, even all the coast-lands of the nations.

12 [Mine anger shall be upon the Ethiopians, saith the Lord], Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by My sword.

13 [Mine anger shall be upon Assyria, saith the Lord], And He will execute judgment against Assyria, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.

14 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all kinds of the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the carved capitals of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for He shall uncover the cedar work.

15 This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, 'I am, and there is none beside me:' how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.'

3 Alma for [Mine anger shall be upon Jerusalem, saith the Lord], Jerusalem that is rebellious and polluted, to the oppressing city!

2 She obeyed not the voice; neither hath she accepted discipline; she confided not in the LORD; neither unto her God hath she drawn near.

3 Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they reserve not the bones till the morrow.

4 Her prophets are reckless and men of treacheries: her priests have profaned the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

5 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; He will not do iniquity: morning by morning doth He bring His judgment to light, He faileth not; but the perverse knoweth no shame.

6 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

7 I said, 'Surely thou wilt fear Me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.

8 Therefore wait ye for Me, is Jehovah's oracle, until the day that I rise up as a witness: for My determination is to gather in the nations, that I may gather out the kingdoms, to pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy.

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For "then [after all that is implied] will I turn to the peoples "a lip separated from that which is unclean," that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one consent.

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshippers, even My dispersed People Israel, shall bring Mine offering.

In that day shall thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against Me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty in My holy mountain.

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor People, and they shall flee for refuge to the name of the LORD.

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Fear thou not: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make thee a burden on thee.

I will gather in them that are sorrowful for the cessation of the appointed season, who are of thee, to whom the reproof of it was a burden on thee.

Behold, at that time I will deal with all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and bring together what has been dispersed; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you in: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I restore your blessings as aforetime before your eyes, hath said the LORD.